

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 have been allowed.

Claims 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In claim 17, line 13, the recitation "said in-feed conveyor" has been found to lack proper antecedent basis because the term "in-feed conveyor" has not been previously positively recited, rather merely set forth as the intended use of the method. However, the claims were indicated as being allowable if properly amended to overcome this rejection.

Claim 17 has been amended above to positively recite the in-feed conveyor in line 5 of the amended claim. This amendment is believed to address and overcome the indefiniteness rejection.

The drawings stand objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as failing to show certain features of the invention recited in the claims. Specifically, the examiner points out that the vacuum control (claim 1, line 19), the first vacuum surface adjustably positioned (claim 2, line 2), the second vacuum surface adjustably positioned (claim 3, lines 1 and 2), the first vacuum surface upwardly convex (claim 4, line 2), the air nip adjustably positionable (claim 7, lines 1 and 2), and the snubber wheel assembly adjustably positionable (claim 9, lines 1 and 2) must be shown without the addition of new matter.

Amendments have been made to the specification, claims and the drawings to address the foregoing drawing objections.

Support for the term "vacuum control" in line 19 of claim 1 has been added by amendment in line 6 on page 8 of the specification by inserting the phrase "a vacuum control such as" to provide the generic support for the shuttle valve 38 which is the form of vacuum control in the preferred embodiment.

With respect to the phrase "first vacuum surface is adjustably positioned", in line 2 of claim 2, the claim has been amended to substitute "vertically" for "adjustably" to amended claim 2. This amended is consistent with the language in the specification, in line 11 on page 9. In addition, the specification has also been amended at that location to refer to a drawing amendment in Fig. 3, adding a double-headed arrow to indicate the vertical positioning range as recited in amended claim 2.

With respect to the phrase "second vacuum surface adjustably positioned", in claim 3, lines 1 and 2, claim 3 has been amended to substitute the phrase "vertically adjustable" for the phrase "adjustably positioned", the substituted phrase having full support

in the specification in line 17 on page 9. In addition, Fig. 3 of the drawings and the specification, in line 17 on page 9, have been amended to show and describe the double-headed arrow showing vertical adjustment of the second vacuum surface 34.

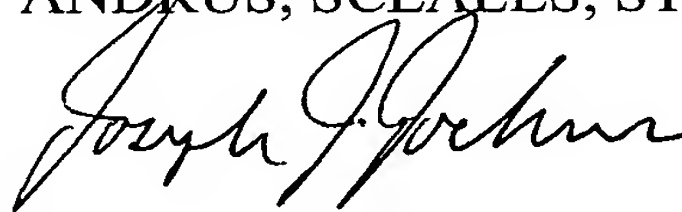
With respect to the phrase "first vacuum surface upwardly convex", in claim 4, lines 1 and 2, Fig. 3 of the drawings has been amended to show this alternate embodiment of the first vacuum surface 32. This drawing amendment has full support in the specification in lines 15 and 16 on page 9.

Regarding the phrase "air nip adjustably positionable" in claim 7, lines 1 and 2, claim 7 has been amended to delete the word "positionable" in line 2 and to insert the phrase "positioned longitudinally". This phrase is found in line 9 on page 10. In addition, drawing Fig. 2 and the specification in line 9 on page 10 has been amended to show and describe a double-headed arrow indicating the directions of longitudinal positioning of the air nip 50.

With respect to the phrase "snubber wheel assembly adjustably positionable" in lines 1 and 2 of claim 9, applicant concedes the lack of support for this phrase in either the specification or the drawings. Therefore, claim 9 has been cancelled. The application, including claims 1-8 and 10-18 are now believed to be in condition for allowance and further favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appln. No. 10/620,906
Amdt dated: May 16, 2005
Reply to Office Action of December 15, 2004

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings includes changes to Figs. 2 and 3. Sheets 1/3 and 2/3 include Figs. 2 and 3 and replaces the original sheets including Figs. 2 and 3.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets